

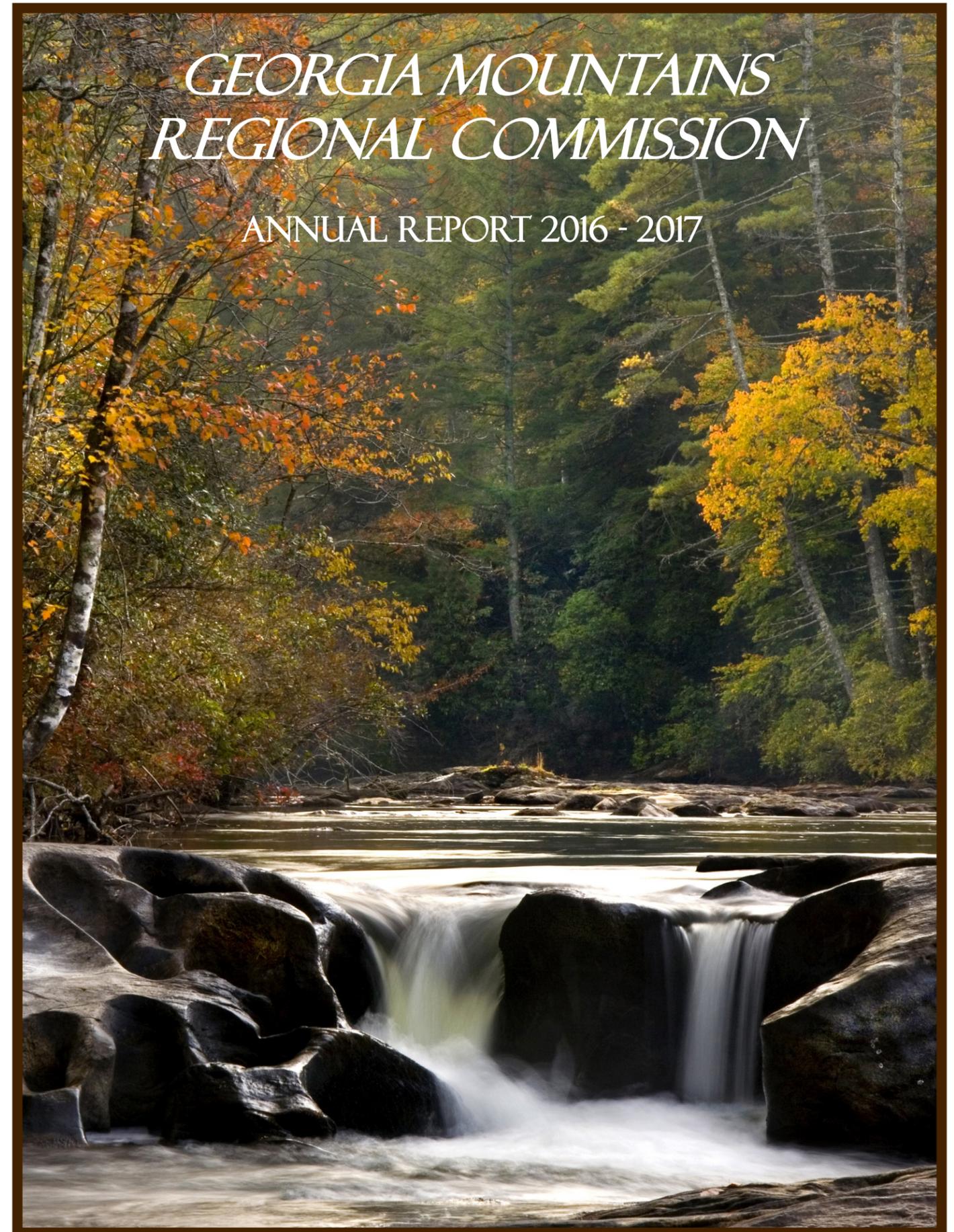
Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
P.O. Box 1720
Gainesville, GA 30503



Meisa Pace, *Editor*

770-538-2612

www.gmrc.ga.gov



Vice-Chairman



W. James Grogan

Chairman



Dean Scarborough

Secretary



George Wangemann

COUNCIL MEMBERS

BANKS COUNTY

Danny Maxwell – Banks County
Jerry Payne – Town of Homer
Leslie George – Private Sector

DAWSON COUNTY

*Mike Berg – Dawson County
* Billy Thurmond – Dawson County
James Grogan – City of Dawsonville
Charlie Auvermann – Private Sector

FORSYTH COUNTY

*Brian Tam – Forsyth County
*Pete Amos – Forsyth County
Chuck Welch – City of Cumming
Robert Long – Private Sector

FRANKLIN COUNTY

*David Strickland – Franklin County
*Thomas Bridges— Franklin County
Ralph Owens – City of Lavonia
Gerald Voyles – Private Sector

HABERSHAM COUNTY

*Sonny James – Habersham County
*Natalie Crawford— Habersham County
Audrey Turner – Town of Alto
Ken Schubring – Private Sector

HALL COUNTY

*Dick Mecum – Hall County
*Richard Higgins—Hall County
George Wangemann – City of Gainesville
Deborah Mack – Private Sector

HART COUNTY

Ricky Carter – Hart County
Tray Hicks - City of Hartwell
William Chafin – Private Sector

LUMPKIN COUNTY

Chris Dockery – Lumpkin County
Sam Norton – City of Dahlonega
J.B. Jones – Private Sector

RABUN COUNTY

Greg James – Rabun County
Debbie Chisholm – City of Clayton
Douglas Wayne – Private Sector

STEPHENS COUNTY

Dean Scarborough – Stephens County
David Austin – City of Toccoa
Connie Tabor – Private Sector

**Served Partial Year*

TOWNS COUNTY

*Bill Kendall – Towns County
*Cliff Bradshaw—Towns County
Andrea Gibby – City of Young Harris
David Stovall – Private Sector

UNION COUNTY

Lamar Paris – Union County
Jim Conley – City of Blairsville
Mitch Griggs – Private Sector

WHITE COUNTY

Travis Turner – White County
Annie Sutton – City of Cleveland
Bill Black – Private Sector

GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENTS

Rex Farmer
Will Wade
Angela Whidby

LT. GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENT

Vacant

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE'S APPOINTMENT

*Peter Hill

YEAR IN REVIEW

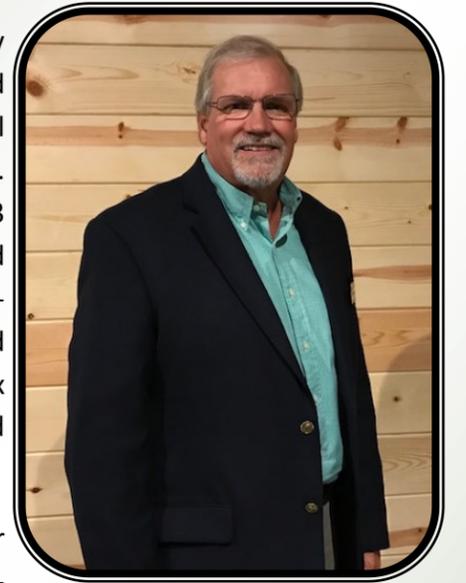


YEAR IN REVIEW



Chairman's Message

First and foremost, I would like to thank our council for the opportunity to serve and represent this great Regional Commission. Our dedicated council members, the outstanding staff, and the people of this beautiful Georgia Mountains Region make it a pleasure to serve in this capacity. How fortunate we are to move our monthly meetings across these 13 gorgeous north Georgia counties and have the chance to see firsthand the natural beauty of our area. The responsibility to preserve the serenity and beauty of the region falls upon our Council member cities and counties to plan and implement policies and programs to continue to mix responsible growth, economic viability, and quality of life to the area and its citizens.



Last year marked the beginning of a fresh era of leadership under our new Executive Director, Heather Feldman. She has brought with her enthusiasm, dedication, and new ideas to make the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission better by serving the cities and counties in our region. Our mission is to seek ways each day to help the region grow economically, yet maintain and preserve its natural and historic characteristics.

This year our staff has once again won three National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) awards for programs provided to our members. We also shared in the work for a fourth NADO award won by the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions. These are, by far, only a sampling of the programs our staff has worked on in assisting our city and county members with their needs for funding, planning, and economic development. Also, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Program, our staff has offered support to our region's needs in assisting the displaced, the unemployed, and the under-employed workers in getting a new start fulfilling their lives with better employment opportunities.

I look forward to the challenges and opportunities of 2018. I feel confident the Georgia Mountains staff and council is "ready, capable, and able" to meet the needs necessary to keep moving our region forward, while still preserving its valuable heritage.

Dean Scarborough,

Chairman

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION



Not Pictured: Diane Jackson, Ebony Tucker, and Judy Reynolds

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- 4** • EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
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Staff photos were taken at The Lavonia Depot, Lavonia, Georgia (Franklin County)

Cover photo courtesy of: Peter McIntosh/www.mcintoshmountains.com

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Annie Sutton



Elected Official of the Year

Micah Thomas



Employee of the Year

CONGRATULATIONS!!



Pictured L to R: Leslie George, Micah Thomas, Heather Feldman, Ken Schubring, Annie Sutton, Dean Scarborough. **Not Pictured:** Kathy Papa

2016



OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Ken Schubring



Appointed Official of the Year

Leslie George



Council Member of the Year

Kathy Papa



Chairman's Award

2016



Executive Director's Report



I am honored to present the 2016-2017 Annual Report. This is my first report since being appointed Executive Director and it is with great pride that I share this overview of the many accomplishments that we celebrate in the Georgia Mountains Region. This year's theme, "**TEAM**" is a simple concept, but has an essential message: Together Everyone Achieves More! Our work is only accomplished through cooperative efforts with our Council Members, local governments, and our federal and state partners, and I along with the staff thank you wholeheartedly for being a part of our **TEAM**.

Our strength as an organization is deeply rooted in providing our member counties and cities with a neutral forum where the leaders of the region have proven that our region's strength and hope for the future lies in working together. Our dedicated staff has done an incredible job at expanding our outreach and strengthening our programs and services. With the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) laws now in place, the past fiscal year has seen lots of transition. We were able to secure a new building for the WorkSource staff. Additionally, we were able to designate the new facility as the Comprehensive One-Stop Center and secured a One-Stop Operator. Our Career Coaches continue to provide individualized training to job seekers in the region, averaging approximately 187 people per month during FY2017.

As the economy has rebounded, we have seen an increase in economic activity for small and large scale projects. The Economic Development Department developed 19 grant applications totaling around \$4,983,188 in federal and state funding for our local governments focusing on community driven projects such as infrastructure improvements, parks and recreation, fire related projects, asset based development, and industry expansions to improve the quality of life for our residents. The RLF program has been very active assisting small businesses and is positioning itself to increase our capital base with new innovative and entrepreneurial projects.

GIS continues to provide high quality work for our member governments and worked on many innovative projects over the last year including MAP-21 project with DOT and ITOS. Our Planning Department has expanded their services including recreational trails/greenspace design and fire assessments for our local governments. A major highlight for planning this year has been the restoration and the preservation of Healan's Mill. Services provided to Hall County have included planning and historic preservation guidance addressing the mill's condition, appropriate uses for the mill and site, the relationship of the mill property and future greenway plans and assistance in updating the 2003 rehabilitation plan.

As Executive Director, I have the great pleasure of working with staff who strives to meet the needs of every community in the GMRC Region. As we move forward, the staff and I are excited to reach the goals we as a region are working towards and look forward to the challenge.

Finally, I want to express my sincere appreciation to Chairman Dean Scarborough and the council members for serving on the Commission's Council. As an organization, we feel the strength of each of our council members, and I applaud the commitment each member puts forth towards the GMRC's mission. I feel extremely fortunate to be serving GMRC at a time when the spirit of cooperation and working together as a **TEAM** has never been greater in our region. Thank you for making 2017 yet another remarkable year for GMRC!

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman

Heather J. Feldman
Executive Director

The Economic Development Department ended another successful year with **19** approved grant and loan applications totaling **\$4,983,188** in funding for member governments. The Department also administered **12** projects totaling **\$5,423,763** in federal and state funds during the last fiscal year.

As a result of these projects, **326** jobs will be created for residents in the region. In addition, **\$130,805,000** in private investment was leveraged for these projects.



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

The City of Commerce (lead), and Banks County received Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant funding in the amount of **\$1,000,000** for water and sewer infrastructure improvements to support businesses located in the Banks County Industrial Park.

Hart County received EDA grant funding in the amount of **\$123,838** to support the expansion of a road for Linde + Wiemann who located to Gateway Industrial Park II.



Hall County	Healan's Mill Land Acquisition	\$300,000.00
Sautee Nacoochee Community Association	SNCA Marketing Mobile Application	\$40,000.00
Cradle of Forestry (Brasstown Bald)	Museum and Video Updates	\$54,200.00
The Foxfire Fund, Inc.	Mobile Application Project	\$21,000.00
City of Hiwassee	Strategic Plan	\$21,000.00
City of Gainesville	Downtown Mobile Hotspot	\$30,000.00
City of Gainesville	Airport Terminal Project	\$250,000.00
JDA of Fannin, Towns, & Union	NGTC Industrial Training Lab	\$277,000.00



The department is the recipient of two NADO Innovation Awards for the following projects:



Lake Lanier Olympic Venue (Hall County)



Nifco KTW (Stephens County)

ONEGEORGIA AWARDS

The Union County Development Authority was awarded **\$200,000** in OneGeorgia Equity funding for site infrastructure improvements at the Blairsville Airport Regional Industrial Park.

The Hart County Industrial Building Authority received **\$600,000** in OneGeorgia EDGE grant funding for the expansion of Linde + Wiemann manufacturing facility in Hart County.

The Franklin County Industrial Building Authority received **\$500,000** in One Georgia Equity funding for infrastructure improvements at the Central Franklin Industrial Park.



Pictured L to R: Cheryl Smith, Financial Assistant; Barbara Moseley, Financial Assistant; Nona Turk, Financial Assistant; Andrea Newsom, Finance Director

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The RC's total assets exceeded its liabilities by **\$2,901,473** for the fiscal year reported.
- There was a **\$414,592** increase in the RC's fund balance in the General Fund.
- As of June 30, 2017, the RC's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of **\$2,167,091**, an increase of **\$414,592** from the prior year. Of this amount, **\$2,071,782** (unassigned fund balance) may be used to meet the RC's ongoing obligations to the member local governments and creditors.



Upon the Executive Director's approval, the applications were submitted to the RLF Committee for review.

The GMRC RLF Program currently has **19** active loans totaling close to **\$1.3** million. The RLF Program supports industries in the region such as construction, daycare, dental hygiene, millwork, racetrack, restaurants, property management, livestock equipment, accounting, venue services, and veterinary services.



Three of the four applications were analyzed, and two were approved by the RLF committee. The GMRLF Program was able to support community growth in an industry promoting local food development and another in diesel repair. In FY 2017, the GMRC RLF Program loaned **\$170,000** in the GMRC Region.

The Administration Department continued to work closely with the Executive Director and the GMRC Council with day-to-day operations of the Regional Commission. Some of these activities include record keeping, updating contracts, publication of the monthly newsletter, vehicle maintenance, and other key roles within the organization.

TEAMWORK DIVIDES THE TASKS

AND MULTIPLIES THE SUCCESS!!



Pictured L to R: Peggy Lovell, Executive Assistant; and Marissa Smith, Administrative Secretary

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

This historic mill between Gainesville and Lula is being restored by Hall County as a tourism and educational resource for the community. The project involves the restoration of the historic structure and the expansion and amendments to the property to accommodate visitors and additional recreational uses. The GMRC assisted with the consultation of the restoration effort and guidance on the use of the site, plus helped the County acquire grant funding for the work.



Healan's – Head's Mill Restoration

- ◆ Last grist mill in Hall County and the buildings are listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*.
- ◆ Exterior of 1850's grist mill and out buildings restored from 2015-2017.
- ◆ Final phase of project will include the construction of a Visitor's and Heritage Center on surrounding land that will be purchased to illustrate what life was like for those who lived during the time when the water-powered mill was in its peak of operation.

Toccoa Design Guidelines Update

- ◆ Update to existing 2010 document for Toccoa Historic Preservation Commission.
- ◆ Concise and user friendly document to aid property owners planning renovations and new construction in Toccoa's historic district.
- ◆ Guides economic development opportunities in the commercial district while protecting the integrity of Toccoa's architectural heritage.



Pictured L to R: Patrick Larson, Senior Project Manager.; Laurin Yoder, Project Manager, Meisa Pace, Grant Administrator; and Daniel Martin, Director of Economic Development



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

Habersham County received **\$750,000** in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for expansion and renovations to the County Senior Center.



Lumpkin County received **\$595,726** in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for expansion and renovations to the County Senior Center.



CEDS ANNUAL UPDATE

Working in close coordination with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, chaired by GMRC Council Member, Mitch Griggs, ED staff prepared the Five-Year rewrite to the CEDS and submitted the document to the Economic Development Administration. The CEDS serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration.



Recreational Trails Grant



Recreational Trails Grant funding from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in the amount of **\$179,000** was awarded to the following two communities:

- City of Lula – Nature Trails
- City of Toccoa – Trail at Lake Toccoa

Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded two Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) totaling **\$41,424** to the following two communities in our region:

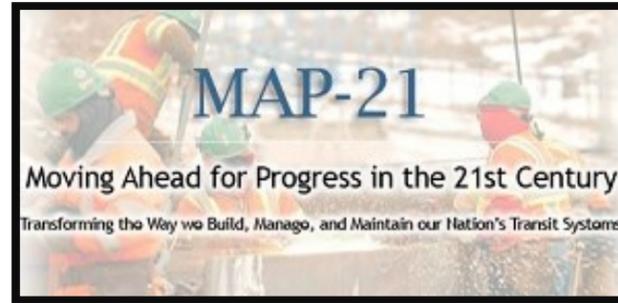
- City of Royston - **\$6,662**
- Bold Springs Volunteer Fire Department - **\$34,762**

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The City of Toccoa was awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant in the amount of **\$80,000**



Pictured L to R: Brandon Carlock, GIS Technician
Faith Bryan, Information Services Director



The GDOT Office of Transportation Data (OTD) is charged with specific database validation requirements associated with GIS-based road centerline attribution mandated by the federally-enacted Surface Transportation Act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions signed an agreement with UGA's Information Technology and Outreach (ITOS) division, to perform the MAP-21 work required in each regional commission area.

Verification processes will be performed on five key data elements pertaining to roads across the region. Those are: ownership, operation, number of lanes, surface type, and median. Information on traffic control devices where local roads meet highways and all road names will be submitted for each county in the GMRC region. The first county completed by GMRC staff was Hall County.



In December, GMRC hosted Natalie Lee with Michael Baker International. She presented information regarding NextGEN-911 and implementation deadlines. NG911 is an Internet Protocol (IP)-based system that allows digital information (e.g., voice, photos, videos, text messages) to flow seamlessly from the public, through the 911 network, and on to emergency responders. Existing 911 systems cannot handle or process some of the above-mentioned data. The implementation deadline to have all 911 systems updated is 2020.

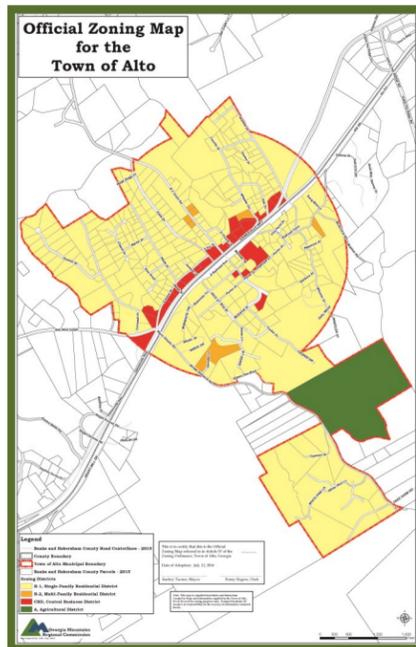
The Georgia Mountains Region remains one of the more dynamic parts of Georgia and the southeast, literally at the dividing line between booming metropolitan markets and some of the most pristine rural scenery. It is a landscape filled with beauty and depicting the signs of change as several communities brace for community development amidst growing economies and ever-changing lifestyles. Even outside of the metropolitan counties of Forsyth and Hall the region still experienced thousands of new residents moving into the area, with the mountain communities finally seeing a recovery from the recession. New home construction has fully returned, resulting in the region growing into a larger share of the state's population; from 6.4% in 2010 to 6.7% in 2016. Several counties experienced less than 2% growth during the same time period.

POPULATION CHANGE

	2010	2016	'10-'16	
			#	%
Georgia	9,713,521	10,310,371	596,850	6.14
GMRC	619,624	688,724	69,100	11.15
Banks County	18,408	18,397	(11)	-0.06
Dawson County	22,287	23,604	1,317	5.91
Forsyth County	176,770	221,009	44,239	25.03
Franklin County	22,075	22,320	245	1.11
Habersham County	43,081	44,246	1,165	2.70
Hart County	25,210	25,553	343	1.36
Lumpkin County	30,301	31,445	1,144	3.78
Rabun County	16,269	16,559	290	1.78
Stephens County	26,150	25,751	(399)	-1.53
Towns County	10,541	11,391	850	8.06
Union County	21,321	22,928	1,607	7.54
White County	27,209	28,884	1,675	6.16

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP-TOWN OF ALTO

Through a coordinated effort involving the Mayor, Town Council and Attorney, GMRC staff created the first Zoning Map for the Town of Alto. Upon completion and approval of the printed map, the Town Council adopted it as the Official Zoning Map.



Windmill Park (Banks County) Conceptual Plan

The GMRC has begun offering more services with regards to long-range planning and conceptual site planning for parks and recreation facilities. Long-range master plans for parks and recreation programs provide assessments of needs and projected demands for local recreation facilities and services. The conceptual site plans help assess the prospective use and layout of individual park properties, to assist with coordinating uses and projecting potential project costs.

Environmental Support

Throughout FY17, the GMRC continued to work with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to support the 3 regional water planning councils active within our 13 counties as each updated their portions of the Georgia State Water Plan. The GMRC also continued various projects and assistance with the development of and/or implementation of Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) needed to restore the compliance of impaired waters.

319 Grant Projects		
Soque River	Habersham County	Completed WMP
Upper Chestatee River	Lumpkin County	Initiated WMP implementation projects with UNG
Upper Chattahoochee	White County	Initiated WMP

Sautee Nacoochee Community Association
(SNCA) Campus MasterPlan

The objective for this project was to create a conceptual Master Plan that would help the SNCA advance their efforts to bring artistic and cultural events to the area by guiding them toward a more unified and functional campus. The purpose of the plan is to coordinate and prioritize physical improvements, communicating and promoting the long-term business plan to potential partners and donors, and to aid in pursuit of grant and loan funding for the various campus improvements. The Master Plan provides the SNCA with imagery and descriptions of the various elements that can now be addressed with an understanding of how it will all come together as part of a unified vision. Highlights of the design approach include a Story Trail, thematic fencing and decorative elements, stations for artistic and historic learning, as well as space for a new events facility and outdoor kiln.



Highlights of the design approach include a Story Trail, thematic fencing and decorative elements, stations for artistic and historic learning, as well as space for a new events facility and outdoor kiln.

REGIONAL REVIEWS

Review Type	Total
Local Comprehensive Plans	7
Developments of Regional Impact	4
Metropolitan River Protection Act	2
State Intergovernmental (A-95)	3
Natural Resource (Sec. 106)	11

As part of our state duties for the *Department of Community Affairs (DCA)* the GMRC conducts reviews for local comprehensive plans and projects. These may include environmental and cultural assessments, infrastructure impacts, and development assessments along the Chattahoochee River corridor. These reviews ensure compliance with state and federal regulations as well as working to prevent conflicting land uses or overtaxing of local resources and infrastructure.



Pictured L to R: Caleb Davidson, Regional Planner, Joe Rothwell, Regional Planner, and Adam Hazell, Planning Director

LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

As both a State authorized agency and an extension of our member governments, the GMRC Planning Department works to assist our communities in developing, maintaining, and implementing their required Comprehensive Plans. During FY17, the GMRC worked on seven plan updates for 11 communities.

ATLANTA HIGHWAY CORRIDOR



With the reassignment of State Route 9 to a different corridor, Atlanta Highway became an opportunity for the City of Cumming to revitalize a key gateway leading into their downtown. With help from the

GMRC, the City is assessing the properties and streetscape along this 1.5 mile long commercial arterial, and crafting a vision for how it can evolve into a more scenic, thriving, and safe corridor that welcomes people to the city and better integrates downtown with the surrounding districts.



Atlanta Highway Corridor (City of Cumming)
Proposed Streetscape Improvement

BOUNDARY ANNEXATION SURVEY

In preparation for the United States 2020 Census, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs requested Regional Commissions to assist our local governments with the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS). These boundaries are used to determine where residents are located and counted. GMRC staff assisted the municipalities of Lula, Dawsonville, Mt. Airy, Hartwell, Cornelia, Clermont, Alto, Maysville, Clayton, Carnesville, Gillsville, Young Harris, and Hiawassee. We also submitted boundary information on behalf of Towns County, Lumpkin County, and Banks County.



LUCA Informational Workshops

The 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Operation

What is LUCA?
LUCA is the only opportunity offered to tribal, state, and local governments to review and comment on the U.S. Census Bureau's residential address list for their jurisdiction prior to the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau relies on a complete and accurate address list to reach every living quarter and associated population for inclusion in the census.

Why participate in LUCA?

- To help ensure an accurate decennial census count in your community.
- To help the federal government distribute more than \$400 billion in funds annually for infrastructure, programs, and services.
- To help your community plan for future needs.

Who can participate in LUCA?
Active, functioning, legal governments can participate in LUCA. These include:

- Federally recognized tribes with a reservation and/or off-reservation trust lands.
- States.
- Counties.
- Cities (incorporated places).
- Townships (minor civil divisions).

Schedule

- January 2017: Advance notification of LUCA mailed to the highest elected official (HECO) or Tribal Chairperson (TC) of all eligible governments and other LUCA contacts.
- March 2017: LUCA promotional workshops begin.
- July 2017: Invitation letter and registration forms mailed to the HECO or TC of all eligible governments.
- October 2017: Training workshops begin. Self-training aids and Webinars will be available online at the LUCA Web site.
- February 2018: Participation materials mailed to registered participants. Participants have 120 calendar days from the receipt of materials to complete their review.
- August 2018: Feedback materials offered to participants with the results of Address Canvassing.
- April 1, 2020: Census Day.

Connect With Us: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn

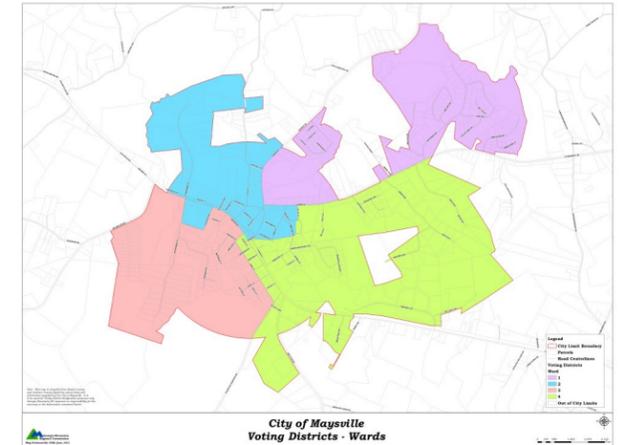
In May, GMRC hosted the U.S. Census Bureau and local governments for the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Informational Workshop.

The LUCA Operation is the only opportunity for local governments to review and update the U.S. Census Bureau's residential address list for their community. The accuracy and completeness of the address list is critical to the accuracy and completeness of the decennial census. Although the primary purpose of the decennial census is to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, census data is also used to distribute federal funds to local governments, provide statistical data support for grant applications and help your community plan for future needs. Invitations to participate in the LUCA Operation were mailed to the highest elected official of each City and County in the GMRC region in July.

OTHER NOTABLE PROJECTS

Zoning Map Updates for the cities of Young Harris, Mt. Airy, Homer, Dawsonville, and Maysville

Updated the Voting District Map for the City of Maysville



Performed digital parcel updates for Towns County's 2015 tax digest year

Updated the Burgess Memorial Cemetery Map for the City of Lavonia





WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM), had a marathon year. We opened our long awaited new workplace office that is now a Comprehensive One-Stop Center located at 1856 Thompson Bridge Road in Gainesville. The long awaited new office houses the Georgia Mountains WorkSource and required training partners that make it easier and more efficient for us to provide service to our customers. Changing our logo and name to WorkSource Georgia Mountains, was an initiative by the Department of Economic Development Workforce Division to create a recognizable common brand for all WIOA areas within the state.

CAREER COACHES

WorkSource Georgia Mountains Career Coaches provided services and training for both Adults and Youth combining computer and internet access for job search and career development. Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 approximately 2,255 people visited the Career Coaches for individualized services. Over 4,460 different actions have been tracked on board the Career Coaches. This includes 888 on-line job searches, 111 online job applications placed, 648 resumes' developed/critiqued, 889 career assessment surveys, and 1,722 people receiving information on the WIOA program and the services provided by WorkSource Georgia Mountains.



YOUTH SERVICES

The Youth Services began a new program in partnership with the three technical colleges in the Georgia Mountains area. The technical colleges included are: Lanier Tech, North Georgia Tech, and Athens Tech. The GED Success programs brought in 128 new participants, with 40 receiving their GED's, 38 receiving paid internships, and 26 receiving a skills certification. The GED Success program also incorporates soft skills training and financial literacy into the program.



The Transition to Success program, which is the Youth GED program, housed inside the Regional Youth Detention Center includes life skills training, mentoring/counseling, and occupational skills training (on a case by case basis).



Youth Services also offered workshops covering topics including: character building, future planning, program overviews and financial literacy throughout the 13 county region reaching youth in Banks (205 youth), Habersham (130 youth), Hall (165 youth), Hart (7 youth), Forsyth (5 youth), Stephens (100 youth), and White (75 youth).

The first annual youth conference was held on June 9, 2017. It offered motivational speakers, door prizes, interviews with one of the manufacturing companies and breakout sessions including topics such as finances, healthy relationships, character and resume building.

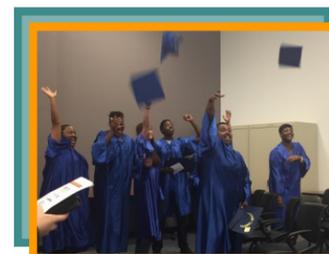
The partnership with the project search assisted 7 interns with a 100% completion rate and a 60% employment rate as of June 30, 2017. Total number of participants served during the year was 389.

INTAKE SERVICES

Intake received 1,468 visits for services to the office during FY 2017. In addition, they also received 484 applications for adult services.

ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER

Adult/Dislocated Worker staff served 590 individuals over the last year. WIOA funding provided them with career services and supported their occupational skills training through area training providers. The numbers by county were: Banks (17), Dawson (14), Forsyth (55), Franklin (25), Habersham (83), Hall (202), Hart (19), Lumpkin (14), Rabun (22), Stephens (55), Towns (11), Union (18), and White



The Transition Welding program continued to thrive this past year. Thirty six ex-offenders received training in welding and workplace soft skills through a partnership with Goodwill of North Georgia, Arrendale Transitional Center, Hall County Transitional Center, Phillips Transitional Center, and area technical colleges, including North Georgia Technical College and Lanier Technical College.

The program equips job seekers with the skills and certifications in an effort to increase their opportunities for successful reentry. Research has consistently shown that offenders who find stable employment soon after release from incarceration are less likely to recidivate. Employment not only provides income to meet basic needs but also provides the means to become a productive member of the community.



RAPID RESPONSE

Rapid Response provided much needed transitional services to 60 dislocated workers prior to their job loss due to plant's closing of one of its production lines. A special Job Fair was also arranged for these dislocated plant employees with a top notch group of recruiters present. Several employees chose to seek additional marketable skills training through WSGM and the WIOA Grant.



ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING

WSGM met with 15 employers ranging from mortgage companies and healthcare providers to landscaping and manufacturing companies in six counties to discuss how the On the-Job Training Program (OJT) could assist in meeting their employment needs. Nine adults were placed in new careers with two employers through the OJT Program. They received training in positions as Lawn Spray and Lawn Maintenance Technicians, Assemblers, and Injection Mold Operators.